

## PERILS OF BRAKEMEN.

The Reward That Came for Saving the Life of a Green Railroad Hand.

"I don't believe a good action goes unrewarded," said an old railroad man the other day to the writer.

"About twenty years ago I was shoveling black diamonds to fill the water in a locomotive on the Wabash railway between Lafayette, Ind., and Danville, Ill. Near Attica, Ind., there was an overhead wagon bridge across the track that had killed no less than five brakemen in five years, and one dark, stormy night, in coming down the hill, I happened to remember that we had a green brakeman ahead who was unacquainted with the road.

"I spoke to the engineer about it, but he said, 'Oh, let him go; he's all right.' But I didn't feel like letting a fellow mortal take any such chances, and started back over the train, crawling from car to car in the Egyptian darkness, and came near being blown off several times, as it was blowing great gusts and old No. 53 was fanning that train fifty miles per hour down the summit. Back twelve cars from the engine I found 'Brakesy,' who was as tall and handsome a young man as you could find in a thousand, and he was twisting up the slack of those brake chains with neatness and dispatch, while the wheels made a regular torchlight procession along the rails. He was badly scared when he first discovered me by the light of his old lantern, crawling along the running board, with my face as black as the ace of spades from the dusty diamonds.

"Sit down! Sit down!" I cried so loud that I almost imagined the whistle was sounding for Attica; and down he sat so hard and quick that he bit his tongue, and the next moment we flew under the bridge, while his lamp seemed to burn brighter as it disclosed those heavy timbers over our head that killed many poor brakemen. He came near fainting when he clasped my hand, and we sat for several moments on the wet deck of the car and neither of us spoke a single word, but we were as white around the eyes as the ghost of Hamlet's father.

"Six years afterward I was in Fort Wayne, Ind., at the Wabash depot, one morning, the most disconsolate man on God's earth. I had been hurt on the road several years before, was unable to work and was trying to get back home to old Lafayette, Ind., as I thought, to die. I was hungry and tired and didn't have a cent in the world, and to see people step up to the lunch counter and call for hot coffee that was smelling to heaven was enough to set a poor, flat broke invalid crazy. I had begun to think that all my friends had been conveniently translated bodily from earth to heaven, when a tall, handsome conductor, with a silver lamp and gold banded cap, approached me and inquired:

"Didn't you fire an engine about five years ago on the western division of the Wabash?"

"Yes," I replied, "and it was a sorry day that I ever went to railroadin'."

"Do you recognize me?"

"No, sir," and yet I thought his face began to assume the angelic.

"Well, I will refresh your memory. Do you recollect of risking your life one dark, stormy night in crawling over a freight train to warn a green brakeman about a dangerous overhead bridge below Attica?"

"You bet I do! But you're not Billy, the brakeman?"

"No, sir. No more Billy in mine; it's Will—sweet Will—the pectorator on the through passenger, and he broke out into a musical laugh that nearly rattled the dishes on the lunch counter.

"The tears came to my eyes in spite of me, for I was weak, weary and heartsick. He noticed them, and clasping his hands said in sweetest words that ever fell on mortal ears:

"Come, come! Shut her off and oil the valves, and he led me to a stool at the lunch counter and said:

"Now you sit here and fill up. Let a few biscuits hit the chair and you will be all right again."

"He stepped into the dispatcher's office to get his orders while I poured down coffee that would discount the nectar of the gods. He appeared in about ten minutes and said, 'All aboard for Lafayette,' took me by the arm and led me to a coach and then stepped back to the platform and waved his moss agate at the engineer. I curled up in the seat when the train started to hide the tears that kept welling up in my eyes, and for the first time in twenty long years I could have cried like a baby. I believe in a special providence since that terrible night and the morning I was heartbroken, and Bill—the sweetest Will on earth—is still pulling a bell cord in the vanished cars on the old Wabash."—Argentine (Kan.) Republic.

An American Consul Who Likes Robbers.

"Let me tell you a good story of Yankee pluck," said a prominent business man to a reporter recently. "It is about my friend James Springer, acting American consul at Matanzas, a well known Cuban seaport town. A dispatch came to me yesterday saying that Mr. Springer had been visiting his brother, the American vice consul general at Havana, and that the other night on going out for a walk he said: 'Joe, I like the looks of that stick of yours. If you don't mind I'll take it along with me.'"

"Late that evening, as the consul was returning through a dark and lonely street he was assailed by two highwaymen armed to the teeth, who presented their weapons and demanded his money or his life. Mr. Springer, who is famous throughout Cuba for his coolness and nerve, struck one of the footpads such a blow with his cane that the fellow's skull was nearly fractured. The other robber was disabled by a second stroke of the good stick, and ran away howling with fear and pain. Mr. Springer has had many adventures of a similar kind in Cuba.

"A few weeks ago he was being driven in a sort of Victoria through a lonely part of a Cuban town, when his hired coachman turned in his seat, presented a cocked pistol and demanded his fare's money. Mr. Springer's reply was a swinging 'right hander,' which knocked 'cabby' off his seat into the street, where he was soon arrested by the police."—New York Tribune.

Stealing Government Bills for Paper.

Recently a five dollar note on the National Bank of Rhode Island, at Newport, came in for redemption. On the face it looked quite new, but the back was washed perfectly clean, so that not a mark was left on it. The joke of it is that the bureau of engraving adopted the brown back for such bills on the ground that it could not be washed off, as the green back can be. It was intended in this way to prevent counterfeiters from procuring treasury paper by rendering notes of small denominations blank with acids and printing big ones on them. This is the first time that confidence in the indelibility of the brown ink has been disturbed. Even the seal on the front, which is done in the same ink, has entirely disappeared in the bill described. Whether the thing was done for a jest or by accident the authorities do not pretend to say.—Washington Letter.

## His Visiting Card.

Mrs. D'Avonno—Here is a card just sent up.

Mr. D'Avonno (looking at the card)—"Col. George Washington Lee." I have not had the honor of meeting Colonel Lee, but he must be a gentleman of some importance. Have him shown up.

Eastern Stranger—I see glad you didn't keep me waiting, sah, 'cause I's gottor hustle of I call at all de places de employment agent gub me. I'm lookin' for a situation as coachman, sah.

Mr. D'Avonno—Eh? Your card said Col. George Washington Lee.

Stranger—Not kernal, sah. C-o-l. stand fo' cullud, sah.—Good News.

## The Mean Old Thing.



Husband (kindly)—My dear, you have nothing decent to wear, have you?

Wife (with alacrity)—No, indeed, I have not; not a thing. I'd be ashamed to be seen anywhere. My evening dress has been worn three times already.

Husband—Yes; that's just what I told Biffins when he offered me two tickets for the theater for tonight. I knew if I took them they'd only be wasted, so I just got one. You won't mind if I hurry off.—London Thoughts.

## He Went West.

It was about 9 o'clock in the evening that he suddenly rose up off a box in front of a store on Chambers street and accosted me with:

"Say, do you live here?"

"Yes."

"Regular New Yorker?"

"Yes."

"Proud of the town, of course, and wouldn't live anywhere else for a million dollars a year?"

"Well?"

"Well, she's a buster. Lots o' things to be stuck over. Don't wonder you go around patting yourself on the back. Say! I don't live here."

"No?"

"Live way out west in a town of 3,000 inhabitants. Just going home tonight. Sorry to go, but I got to. Say!"

"Yes."

"I want to take away with me a pleasant impression of your great and noble city. Want that impression to last as clear home, and when I get there I want to go down to the grocery and say to the boys: 'Boys, it ain't no use talking. She beats all creation, and them New Yorkers are the all-fired richest, smartest and big hearted people in all this world.'"

"Right here. You hand me a dime; dime produces pleasant impression; pleasant impression makes me a friend of New York. Present impression fluctuates and wobbles—maybe I like New York, maybe I don't. See? Better fix me."

I hastened to fix him, and after assuring himself of the value of the coin he lifted his hat, bowed gracefully and said:

"Impression is now all right, and is going to be righter in about five minutes. Westward ho! is my watchword. Farewell!"—Chicago Tribune.

## Working a Claim.

"Yes, darling," she said softly, "I want so much for you to see me in my new seal-skin cloak."

"That will be a great pleasure," he muttered. "Tell me, dear, was it made to order?"

"Of course," she replied. "Why do you ask?"

"Because," he answered (shyly toying with one of her twenty-five cent curls), "I thought, perhaps, there might be enough left over to make me a cap."—Cloak Review.

## Wanted a Head Put on Him.

An old man with a head as destitute of hair as a watermelon, entered a Manhattan avenue drug store and told the clerk he wanted a bottle of hair restorer.

"What kind of hair restorer do you prefer?"

"I reckon I'll have to take a bottle of red hair restorer. That was the color it used to be when I was a boy."—Texas Siftings.

## That Was All.

Smith—I say, Smythe!

Smythe (who is running at the top of his speed, stops)—Well, what is it? Hurry up (puff, puff), please. I have only two minutes to go.

Smith—I merely wanted to say that you'd lose your train if you didn't hurry up.—Yankee Blade.

## Delicate Flattery.

"What ever made you make Brackins a present of a pocket comb? He's as bald as a billiard ball."

"That's just it; I want to make him think I never noticed it."—Washington Star.

## Very Little Does It.

Harry—Stunning girl just passed, eh, old boy? Did you see her look back at me?

Fred—Yes; they say it don't take much to turn a woman's head.—Fun.

## The Difference Defined.

The difference between an editor and his wife is that his wife sets things to rights while he writes things to set.—Yonkers Statesman.

## Only One Thing to Do.

There seems to be no course open to Washington Chinamen except to drop "fan tan" and learn to play poker.—Washington Star.

## Remember This.

Every man who does not labor and lay up a fortune may cause absolute suffering to his daughter's future husband.—Elmira Gazette.

## An Appropriate Head.

"The light that failed" is the title of the only match a man had that went out before he could light the gas.—Lowell Courier.

## WASTED SYMPATHY.

He Wanted to Help the Sufferer, but It Was No Go.

The boat had just left her slip at Staten Island, when a man began to walk up and down the cabin and hold his jaw and groan, as if it wasn't long before every body made out that it was a case of toothache. Whoever says New Yorkers are hard hearted and lack sympathy does them an injustice. It wasn't five minutes before a dozen persons had taken a sympathetic interest in the case and were anxious to do something. The man who seemed to have most sympathy, however, was an old man who had a basket of red peppers in a basket down stairs. He was forcing the season a little with a plush cap and a pair of blue yarn mittens, but no one could doubt that he was big hearted.

"Case of toothache, eh?" he queried as he intercepted the man in his walk. "Oh, well, that don't amount to much. Ever see better fall weather than this?"

The victim looked at him in a puzzled way but did not reply.

"How'd 'lection suit you?" continued the old man in a lively way.

The man with the toothache shut up one eye and groaned.

"Lots of fellers predictin a mighty hard winter, but I don't see any signs of it. I don't go much on predictions; do you?"

The victim got a twinge just then which lifted him off the floor and produced a double groan.

"Some of 'em purtend to tell what the winter is going to be by the way the frogs act, but I don't go a cent on frogs. How can a frog tell what sort of weather we are going to have? Is a frog more intelligent than a human being? The idea is all nonsense."

"But do you want, sir?" asked the sufferer as the pain let up for a moment.

"Oh, nuthin in particular. When I have the toothache I like to have some one talk to me. It sorter takes the mind off the ache. I've cured my old woman by telling her a funny story. Ever hear the yarn about the preacher and the ghost?"

"I want you to go away and let me alone!" exclaimed the other, as his hand went up to his jaw again.

"Don't you want to be talked to?"

"No, sir."

"You don't! Don't you want to forget that toothache?"

"No, sir! I'm in no condition to stand nonsense."

"Waal, by George! Then my sympathy is not wanted?"

"No, sir."

"All right, sir—all right! If you don't want it, I'm not the man to force it upon you. If you are that kind of a man, you can take your old tooth and go to Texas with it! Some folks can appreciate kindness and some can't. Them as can't won't get no sympathy out of me."

The man with the toothache continued his walk, sighing and groaning, while the old man sat down beside me and said:

"Let'er ache! I'd a-had him cured in ten minutes if it hadn been the right sort o' man. I hope he'll have to have that tooth drawn afore he gets through with it. Did you see the way he looked at me?"

"He acted as if he was goin to draw off and hit me, but it's a powerful good thing for him that he didn't do it! Why, sir, if he had I'd a lit onto him like a hurricane onto a skelter, and the toothache would never have bothered him no more! The idea of him acting up that way! Waal, that just shows you what sort o' natures some critters have got and how useless it is to waste any sympathy on 'em!"—New York Evening World.

## Cut His Eye Teeth.

Mr. Gotham—Come back east to live, eh? What was the matter with Dugout City?

Returned Veteran—Too noisy. Couldn't sleep.

Mr. Gotham (to himself)—That town must be booming.

Returned Veteran—I'm not going back there again. I'm going to sell out.

Mr. Gotham (hastily)—Put the figure low and I'll buy.

Mr. Gotham (a month later)—See here! That property you sold me in Dugout City isn't worth taxes. The town is dead and grass growing in the streets. You said you left because it was so noisy there you couldn't sleep.

Returned Veteran (innocently)—Y-es. Can any one sleep with forty million frogs singing under his window?—New York Weekly.

## Ups and Downs.

He—They had a lover's quarrel, parted and she married her father's coachman for spite.

She—What became of her lover?

He—Oh, he married her sister and hired the coachman.—Life.

## From a Future Novel.

Hero—Have you no pity in your heart? Is there no tenderness in your nature? Are you wholly made up of brutal cruelty?

Villain—Ha! Ha! You appeal to a heart of stone. [Hissing.] I was once the center of a football team.

Hero—Then heaven help us all! There is no hope.—Life.

## Rather Stale Bread.

Mrs. Slimlet—The boarders are coming in. Cut the bread, Matilda.

Miss Slimlet—Ma, I saw in a society paper today that bread should be broken, not cut.

Mrs. Slimlet—That's the style now, eh? Very well. Where's the ax.—Good News.

## They Will Come Next.

Wife—My dear, have you such a thing as a match and a piece of string?

Husband—Why, what's up?

Wife—My suspender has busted.—Cloak Review.

## Truth in a Nutshell.

Temperance ladies should remember that bad coffee sometimes furnishes grounds for drinking.—Columbus Post.

## The Last Resort.

The sluggard who goes to his aunt and gets nothing is forced to deal with his uncle.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

## Diogenes in Paris.

Diogenes, looking in the street with a lantern for an honest man, had a sort of imitator in a wealthy citizen of Paris who died recently. Having a fortune of a hundred thousand dollars and no heirs, this man resolved to bequeath his money to some person who had proved to be perfectly honest without any motive of policy. He had retired from business, and spent his time in riding up and down Paris in omnibuses. He always stationed himself near the front part of the interior of the omnibus, where he would have an opportunity to pass up to the driver the fares of passengers and hand back the change.

Frequently, when the change was of a character to admit it, he quietly slipped into it, after the driver had put it into his hand, a fifty centime piece—the equivalent of about a dime—and awaited the result.

A Parisian newspaper asserts that the old man rode up and down the streets for eight years, during all of which time not a single passenger upon whom he had bestowed the coin saw it to restore it to the driver, from whom it was to be supposed it had come.

But at last, one day, when the elderly cynic had slipped his usual small silver piece into the change for a five franc piece, and passed it to a young working girl who had entered the omnibus, he was delighted to hear her say in a clear voice to the driver, "But, driver, you've given me fifty centimes too much!"

The old man said nothing, but made inquiries about the young lady, and having ascertained her name, family and circumstances, he made a will entirely unknown to her, bequeathing her all his property.

Lately he died and the young woman came into possession of her benefactor's fortune of a hundred thousand dollars—a large return, surely, for a restitution of ten cents.

The story is told as a true one, but if it is really true, honesty is a virtue much more rare in Paris than it is in this country.—Youth's Companion.

## Encouragement.

She posed before the camera. In all her cultured grace, Each curl was at its curliest, Each frill was in its place, She fondly deemed her attitude

A miracle of ease. Said the friend behind the camera, "Now, look intelligent, please!" —Boston Post.

## The Song of the Horse.

Turrah for electricity, that saves my tired feet And wheels, with fleet lubricity, the cars along the street!

What wonderful complicity of fate and human brain Have brought me this felicity of rest from toil and pain?

Ere long that grim monstrosity, the horse car, but in song Will live, nor animosity provoke in waiting throng;

No more will domesticity be marred by meals delayed, For with swift electricity there'll be no car blockade.

Then whoop for electricity, the era's drawing nigh That equine infelicity may leave a cosmic sigh— That man's uncurbed ferocity Electra's flank may goad,

And she, in reciprocity, will yank him o'er the road!

With all my lung's capacity, I'd neigh my joy equine, For verbal perspicacity is hardly in my line. Then give the news publicly, the marvel's come to pass;

Whoop! for electricity, the horse may go to grass. —Emilie Pickhardt in Boston Globe.

## VARICUS VERSES.

## A Similar Case.

Jack, I hear that you've been captured With a matrimonial noose; Doubtless now you feel enraptured And old ties will soon cut loose.

I was almost immolated At Bar Harbor last July; It was there, I think you stated, You proposed—well, so did I.

No doubt you left the others In the ballroom, for they say Chaperons and watchful mothers At such times are in the way.

Then you strolled along together Underneath the starlit sky; First you talked about the weather And the season—so did I.

Then your left hand sought to take hers, Finding it within your reach, While you listened to the breakers As they thundered on the beach.

After that your heart grew bolder As you saw that none were nigh; Then you drew her close and told her That you loved her—so did I.

All the rest is repetition, And I'm sure I wish you joy In the change in your condition— I'll accept a card, old boy.

But what makes you look so witted? Why that heart-deavouring sigh? You don't mean that you were jilted? That's a good one—so was I.

—F. H. Curtis in Detroit Free Press.

## "The Melancholy Days."

The editor's brow is wrapped in gloom; His laden eye is full of pain; And dark forbidden thoughts of doom Are preying on his tortured brain.

And drear and welcome his mien; His looks that once were like the night May actually now be seen Their color changing into white.

His shears are deep into the ink, Deep in the mangle his pen; This man of thought will never think A sane and lucid thought again.

Poor wretch! the verses now pour in: A score a day's not half the sum; And all invariably begin, "The melancholy days have come."

## A Failure.

More years ago than I shall name, I sought to win a good wife's fame, I knew not how—but all the same I made a shirt.

I cut, I stitched, with many a tear; I hollowed it out, both front and rear; I carved the armholes wide, for fear They wouldn't fit.

John's neck I measured to be true, The band must fit—that much I knew, I'd heard so oft.—All else I drew And puckered in.

At last 'twas done. A work of art, Complete, I hoped, in every part. "Come, John," I called, with quaking heart, "Try on your shirt."

I must confess it bulged somewhat In places where I thought 't should not, But John, the brute, yelled out: "Great Scott! Is this a tent?"

And such behavior—language, well! He uttered such I'll never tell— I may forget them when I dwell In higher spheres.

Oh, woman of the present day, To you's inscribed this tiny lay, You little know the man you pay Your homage to.

If this "true inwardness" you'd know, Have him your diols overthrow And sentence to four winds blow. Make him a shirt.

I WISH WAS SINGLE AGAIN!

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